

769th Engineer Battalion (Combat Heavy)



January 03, 2003 — Issue 11

Soldiers of the 769th Engineer Battalion:

A new year is upon us and with that comes new beginnings and new opportunities. I would like everyone to take a moment to reflect on all the good things the 769th has accomplished during this deployment.

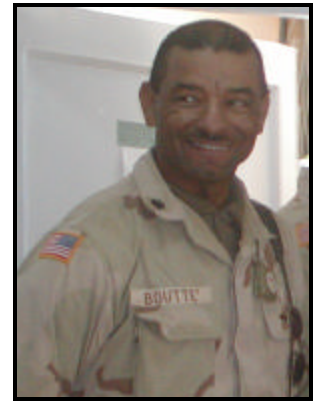
One of the things that I'm very proud of is your dedication and work ethic to the projects that are being conducted at Bagram and Kandahar Airfields, as well as in other areas throughout the theater.

I would like to sincerely thank all of those who have taken time and effort supporting the village of Turkman. For those who are not aware, it is a village located near Bagram that the 769th has adopted. We are accepting various types of donations from soldiers and home to present to this community.

Afghanistan has survived numerous hardships and struggles. It is through our willingness and human kindness that enable us to help the people of this country. The war against terrorism may have been the reason we were brought here, but that was just a stepping stone to allow us to provide humanitarian support.

As our deployment comes to a close, it is imperative to remember that we must keep up the hard work on our various projects. There still remains much work to be done. Your dedication and enthusiastic approach to the job at hand will reap huge benefits to not only soldiers currently stationed in the theater, but also to our sister battalion, the 527th.

Regardless of what the situation was when the 769th arrived to replace the



LTC Boutte'

92nd Engineers, we will continue to do everything within our means to enable the 527th to achieve great things. Just as our soldiers were able to make significant improvements, we wish nothing but the best for our fellow Louisiana soldiers. Be proud of your accomplishments for they did and still do make a difference. Happy New Year 769th.

The following passage is from a sermon by John Hagee:
Submitted by SFC Doxey, 678th EN Detachment

I want you to close your eyes and picture in your mind the soldier at Valley Forge, as he holds his musket in his bloody hands. He stands barefoot in the snow, starved from lack of food, wounded from months of battle and emotionally scarred from the eternity away from his family surrounded by nothing but death and carnage of war. He stands though, with his fire in his eyes and victory on his breath. He looks at us in anger and disgust and tells us this...

I gave you a birthright of freedom born in the Constitution and now for your children graduate too illiterate to read it.

I fought in the snow barefoot to give you the freedom to vote and you stay at home because it rains.

I left my family destitute to give you the freedom of speech and you remain silent on critical issues, because it might be bad for business.

I orphaned my children to give you a government to serve you and it has stolen democracy from the people.

It's the soldier not the reporter who gives you the freedom of the press.

It's the soldier not the poet who gives you the freedom of speech.

It's the soldier not the campus organizer who allows you the demonstrate.

It's the soldier who salutes the flag, serves the flag, whose coffin is draped with the flag that allows the protester to burn the flag!!!



547 Years in the National Guard

Each week, this newsletter would like to recognize an exceptional soldier or group of soldiers for his or her commitment and positive work ethic. Please send recommendations to 1LT Townley and the reasons why you think a particular soldier(s) should be recognized.

This week the newsletter crew would like to do something a little different. We wanted to recognize the soldiers that have dedicated over 20 years of service to the Louisiana Army National Guard. These individuals have spent their time mentoring young soldiers. Thank you for your 547 years of service.



A few words from CSM Serio...

Christmas has past and now a new year is upon us. As with all new years, new challenges lay before us. We are beginning redeployment processes and should be home soon with families and friends.

The deployment has given us an opportunity to experience things that others will never experience in their lifetime. It may not seem like a good lesson at this point, but in the end you will remember this as one of your best accomplishments. Just as in Basic Training, it was one of those experiences you may never want to experience for a second time, but it made you realize your potential.

It pushes you beyond your limits and just when you reach the breaking point, you realize you have more in reserve. We all volunteered to serve our country. We chose to serve and fight in order

to protect those who are unwilling or unable to protect themselves.

Remember, as this deployment comes to a close, safety has been and still remains one of our main concerns. The monotony of working at the same task for long periods of time may allow complacency to set in. Our job here still is extremely important and just as a reputation is made by first impressions, last impressions are remembered most of all. The battalion has done a wonderful job on all projects. We need to continue the good work.

I would like to address some situations that have recently occurred. Tempers may flare as our time comes to a close. Military service is not a democracy. All soldiers must carry out lawful orders when given. Military service requires certain directives be followed by all soldiers, both enlisted and offi-



CSM James Serio

cers. Since we fight and work as a team, we must respect each other in order to accomplish our mission. I assure you that I will personally ensure proper actions are taken if these rules are not followed.

On a more joyful note, I wish good tidings for the new year. New challenges are around each and every corner and as a unified team, we will overcome them together.



C130 Recovery

Maintenance assisted the Air Force in the recovery of a C130 Herc at the Airfield on Christmas Eve and Day. During the landing, four main tires blew out causing the pilots to halt the plane just off of the main runway. The maintenance sections of HSC had to assist by winching the plane with the HEMTT wrecker after the tires were replaced. This deployment has certainly given maintenance personnel many new experiences.

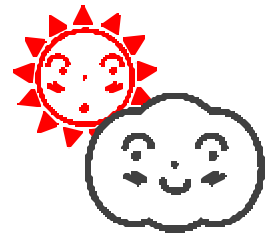
The first snowfall of the season in Bagram

DS Maintenance is hard at work the majority of the time, repairing equipment. However, the section took this opportunity to come together and build their first snowman in Bagram. The snow only lasted for a short while, but to Louisianans this was an experience that won't soon be forgotten.



Camp Cajun Weather Forecast

Friday: 15/ 40
Saturday: 15/ 40
Sunday: 15/ 40
Monday: 15/ 40



Firing Range

HSC and Alpha Company soldiers spent time at the range the past few Sundays familiarizing themselves with their weapons. This will also help to alleviate some of the tasks the units will have to catch up on once they return home.

During each fiscal year, Army National Guard soldiers must qualify on assigned weapons, conduct an APFT to assess physical fitness, and perform Common Task Training/Testing.

Paving the Way

Alpha Company vertical platoon completed the installation of the box culvert and poured concrete to connect Disney Drive and the road to Entrance Control Point 10. The only step left is for ECP 10's road to be brought up to grade with Disney Drive in order to allow for a smooth transition.



What are you going to remember most about Bagram?

“Not having to flush the toilet.” -CPL Dedon

“Phone calls home.” -SGT Christmas

“I won’t remember one specific event, just the experience as a whole.” -SSG Cash

“The friends that I’ve made.” -SGT Arlene Williams

“The carpentry shop.” -SFC Hotard



Question of the Week

What is your New Years Resolution?

Submit answers to 1LT Townley



678th Preparing to Depart

Pictured is the 1st utility section just prior to their movement to a Forward Operating Base. While at this safehouse they will do carpentry, masonry, plumbing, and electrical work in support of CJSOTF and CJMOTF forces.

Christmas Has Arrived

For many soldiers of the 769th, 678th, and 249th, this was their first Christmas away from home. A party was held for the soldiers Christmas Eve to spread some much needed holiday cheer. Gifts were given to soldiers to help them rejoice in the holiday spirit. Pictured are some of the soldiers enjoying themselves during the festivities. *(Ignore the tall guy in the back row. He’s getting coal in his stocking.)*



Removing Rubble

The Hyex is in the process of removing debris from the SSA to provide more operational area for future engineer missions. 769th soldiers have also been pouring concrete slabs to provide additional space for equipment, supplies and storage. If necessary, future projects in this location may allow for additional expansion.



Helping Hand

Along with the engineer effort that the Battalion has been conducting in Afghanistan, the soldiers have also been performing humanitarian missions. The 769th EN BN has adopted the village of Turkman. As part of this mission, the battalion is collecting food, clothing, school supplies, and other miscellaneous items that may be useful to this impoverished community. Pictured is CPL Thomas and SPC Allen of HSC. The mission was a heartfelt experience for those who voyaged out on their first visit. Everyone's support is greatly appreciated.

Forces Merge

The 769th recently assisted Polish Sappers and EOD to recover a Danish F-16 fighter jet that was damaged while attempting to land at Bagram Airfield. The pilot ejected from the plane prior to landing and was unharmed. The recovery took longer than expected due to the location of the jet which was in the middle of a minefield.



Your Generosity is Appreciated

A special thanks to the students of Valverde Elementary School in Maringouin, Louisiana. The students collected nonperishable food items that will be distributed to the local people of Turkman. If anyone from home would like to help in this humanitarian effort, please feel free to send the items to the 769th EN BN and we will ensure the residents of the village receive your donations.

Making Room

769th has teamed up with the 678th in engineer operations that are being conducted at the detainee facility. The Hyex is currently removing debris in order to expand the motor pool. Pictured to the right is SPC Schexnaydre of HSC's equipment platoon operating the Hyex.



Cajun Pics



SSG Percy, SGT Garcia, & SGT Ritchey



SPC Pennington & SGT Anderson



SGT Prince & SGT Witte



SFC Connor



"G- Love, SSG Freeman, SGT Jackson



1LT Lloyd & CPT Perkins



SGT Jackson & SPC Myers



SPC Martin & SPC Delehaye

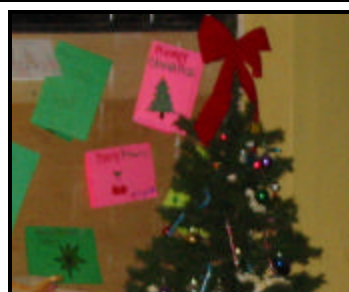


Pouring

Alpha Company with the assistance of HSC's asphalt section is preparing the foundation form at the Bagram Airfield Fire Department. The slab will be poured at a later date. Lots of hard work went into the efforts.

Gifts of Appreciation

I would like to personally thank the friends, families, and students that have taken the time to send Christmas decorations, presents, and handmade cards to the soldiers of the 769th. The items were distributed to the soldiers during the weeks prior to Christmas and were greatly appreciated.



Leaders pull Duty

Although Christmas is a day of celebration, guard duty still needed to be pulled. Our leaders volunteered to the soldiers gear for the day and pull duty allowing the soldiers a day off. This also gives the leaders an opportunity to see the soldiers perspective and how cold the guard towers are at night. Pictured to the right is 1LT Townley getting ready for her shift.

More Dirt

Engineers are in the process of improving the roadway at the Bowie building. This should alleviate some of the problems vehicles may have been experiencing in the past and improve drainage during the upcoming rainy season.



NEW YEAR THOUGHTS

WISHING YOU & YOUR FAMILY A VERY HAPPY
NEW YEAR

We've seen the passing of another year.
For many it's been filled with pain and tears.
We've seen our loved ones in their decline.
We've had to accept that they won't be fine.

Some of us had to say good bye,
To a long time loved one, and we've all cried.
But there have been times in this past year,
That certain events have brought us cheer.
There are so many friends that are on the list,
And I know there's names I will have missed.
But better friends I could not have bought.

And here is just a New Year's thought.
If it were possible that a wish could come true,
Then this is my New Year's wish for you.

May the coming year be full of hope,
And may we be given the strength to cope.
Let courage, faith and patience abound.
And let us pray that a cure will be found.

And now at the close of another year,
My friends, I wish you a Happy New Year.

Samir Shukla

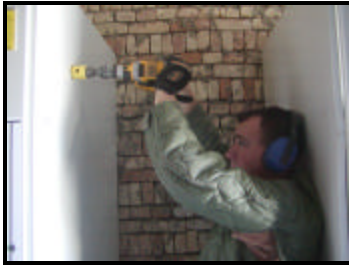


More Improvements

Phase one of the FSSP (fuel storage point) construction is complete, which encompassed building berms to house blivets which will be used to store fuel. The next step is expanding the area in order to have five more blivets moved to the area. The ultimate goal is to allow storage space for one million gallons of fuel. This is the new larger fuel point located at the southern end of the Airfield and will establish a more secure fuel point in the future. The fuel, used by the civilian DOD contractors, US and foreign military, is transported by local Afghans to this location.

Putting Up Walls

HSC Equipment platoon is assisting in spreading earth material in order to reinforce the HESCO walls located at the British AHA (ammunition holding area). The HESCO's play a huge part of the force protection security plan that is used by Bagram Airfield.



249th Prime Power

Prime power is in the process of disconnecting power from the power source. This is being used as an alternative instead of going to the individual compounds and disconnecting the power.

Welding at Work

SPC Bazzle of 678th Engineer Detachment is in the process of welding together the gates for the Entrance Control Point 1 vehicle inspection checkpoint.



If you have anything you would like published in the newsletter please submit to 1LT Townley.

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